



# **Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

## **VR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MODEL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Version 2.0  
Effective: June 29, 2015**



*New Questions/Answers are in red font*

## Transition of Cases

**Q: If a provider receives a referral for employment services prior to July 1, should the provider provide services under existing model?**

A: Yes, if you received a referral to carry out services under the current model, then it is business as usual until, or unless, the local VR office notifies you of any authorizations that are being cancelled.

**Q: We have a few clients that have met with the Employment Consultant and completed the employment plan but will not be having the “PES meeting” with the VRC until after July 1st. What do we do?**

A: Please work with the VR Counselor on how each of these specific cases will be addressed. If PES's were satisfactorily completed before July 1, then VR should reimburse providers for the PES. Providers should ensure that sufficient Discovery activities occurred as part of development of the PES. For these consumers who are then ready to move into job development, they will be transferred out of RBF and into the new model.

**Q: I have a consumer in RBF Tier 1. He is stable and scheduled for closure on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Do I push closure back to August 3<sup>rd</sup>?**

A: Yes, one of the revisions is that ALL cases, including those formerly served under RBF Tier 1, must retain their job for a minimum of 90 days after stabilization before VR may fund the final milestone and prepare to close the case.

**Q: What should we do if an individual served through RBF Tier 1, has reached milestones 2 and 3 paid, and then lost his/her job. How do we transition that person to new system?**

A: In this situation, a conversation with the VR Counselor is necessary to assess the reasons for the job loss and determine what services are necessary to assist with additional job development. If additional job development is necessary, this may be funded through hourly job search/job placement assistance, or if appropriate an authorization under the new milestone 1, Job Development and Placement. If a person served under RBF has lost a job, additional authorized services under RBF would not be appropriate.

## Trial Work Experience

**Q: Is the trial work experience still in place? Will Trial Work Experience be used for the Discovery process?**

VR recognizes there is confusion regarding Trial Work Experience (TWE) and would like to offer some clarification. If a TWE is necessary, it occurs prior to a determination of VR eligibility, and therefore prior to discovery and employment services. The Rehabilitation Act requires that prior to any determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome because of the severity of that individual's disability, VR must conduct an exploration of the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support such a determination. This process is conducted through a TWE and/or an Extended Evaluation (EE). While a Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) may be



asked to conduct a TWE, a TWE is NOT an employment service under Discovery. If a determination is made after a TWE is conducted that a consumer is eligible for VR, the TWE information should be used as part of the comprehensive assessment. There are no changes to the TWE service at this time; however VR will seek to provide more clarification to increase understanding and appropriate use of TWE.

## Discovery

**Q: Do individuals in post-secondary training, or starting post-secondary training, who then are ready to move right to job development after training need Discovery? How long does the Discovery process take? Is there a time limit to discovery activities?**

A: Yes, every VR consumer will need to participate in a Discovery process. However, the Discovery process should be based on each individual's needs and the intensity and duration of the Discovery process should vary greatly by consumer. For some consumers, the initial VR counseling and guidance meeting alone may be sufficient to complete the Discovery process, while other consumers will require a much more intensive process. Discovery should occur early in the VR process to determine each consumer's appropriate employment goal and identify the nature and scope of services needed to achieve that goal. Only after the vocational goal is identified should it be determined that post-secondary training is a necessary service to assist with achievement of the vocational goal. There is no set time limit for the Discovery process, as again this will vary by consumer.

**Q: When a provider receives an initial referral, will that come with hours/authorization? Should providers expect that some of the Discovery Profile be completed and attached to the referral? Will VR counselors be specific about what they want in discovery?**

A: A referral for one or more Discovery activities should include an authorization and some collateral or background information on the consumer, which may include a partially completed *Discovery Profile*. A referral for Discovery activities may occur a few different ways. For instance, some VR Counselors may prefer to initiate the process by authorizing a few hours to the provider for the purpose of setting up a team meeting to discuss what needs to occur during the individual's discovery process. Alternately, the VR Counselor may authorize for one or more specific activities (i.e. a job shadow, work experience, etc.). Depending on the consumer's need and what is learned about the consumer through the Discovery process, the consumer's team may suggest additional purposeful activities or a conclusion may be determined no additional discovery is needed.

**Q: Do we need an authorization for each discovery activity?**

A: Please see the *VR Employment Services Manual*, Attachment B Service Codes and Rates which lists each Discovery activity and the corresponding service code. There may be multiple Discovery activities/services codes on a single authorization. For instance, an authorization may include a line for job shadow, and a separate line for situational assessment.

**Q: When a client is referred to a Community Rehabilitation Provider for some Discovery Activities, how is the Agency reimbursed for the time spent in 'getting to know the client', gathering information from other sources such as schools, family, staff, case workers, etc?**

A: Activities such as meeting with the consumer and the consumer's support team, reviewing background information and collateral, and documentation time are billable activities. These types of activities will



sometimes be billed as 'Other Discovery Activities' or are included under a specific Discovery activity such as Job Shadow or Situational Assessment, depending on what service(s) VR has authorized. For instance, if a VR Counselor authorizes for a job shadow, the hours authorized should be inclusive of the on-site job shadow, site development, documentation, and time to meet with the consumer, with VRC and others as appropriate.

**Q: If a PES (under RBF) was recently completed but feel that more discovery can be beneficial, can we authorize for additional hours? Can you go back to Discovery if you find out there are issues and we need to reassess?**

A: Yes, additional discovery may be performed if needed to ensure that an appropriate employment goal is identified as well as the nature and scope of services needed to achieve the identified goal.

**Q: Are there going to be required meetings during the Discovery process?**

A: At minimum, there should be ongoing communication throughout the discovery process that occurs at least monthly. The team should make every effort to meet upon completion of the Discovery Process, however the consumer should not be held up from beginning the next step (i.e. job development) if a meeting cannot occur. Meetings can occur via teleconference, skype, or other means when face-to-face is not possible.

**Q: Does everyone need Discovery by a Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP)?**

A: No. While all consumers need Discovery, some consumers will need very minimal Discovery while others will need to participate in a much more intensive Discovery process. For those who need minimal Discovery, the Discovery may occur between the VR Counselor and the consumer without need for other partner involvement. For other consumers, a referral for one or more Discovery activities to be carried out by a CRP or other appropriate vendors or State agencies will be necessary. This determination will be made by the VR Counselor and consumer.

**Q: If a client is in Discovery and receives a job offer at that time, what should happen?**

A: Immediate communication with the VR Counselor should occur. VR Counselors will work with consumers and providers as appropriate to address these situations on a case-by-case basis. It is important to ensure that the job offer is in line with the consumer's employment outcome.

## Work Experience

**Q: Is there an expectation that the Employment Consultant is on site during work experience?**

A: Work Experience is a Discovery activity and the purpose of this service is to gain insight into the consumer's interests, skills, abilities, behaviors, support needs, etc. Therefore, it is necessary that the Employment Consultant is on-site with the consumer at least 75% of the time. This is outlined in detail in the *VR Employment Services Manual*.

**Q: Where can work experiences happen (setting)?**



A: Work experiences are conducted in competitive, integrated work settings in the community and are representative of the type of work agreed upon with the consumer. Please see the *VR Employment Services Manual* for additional information about this service.

**Q: Are Work experiences paid or unpaid?**

A: Work experience may be paid or unpaid depending on various factors, including the type of work performed, the customary policies at the work experience business site, etc. It is important to note that VR will not separately fund an individual's payment at a work experience.

**Q: Regarding work experiences: who decides how long they will be?**

A: The decision with respect to the duration of the work experience should take into account what is best for the consumer and his or her informed choice. Based on the team's decision including the VR Counselor, the VR Counselor will then authorize a specific number of weeks of work experience at the appropriate rate. A work experience should be purposeful and should assist with gaining necessary information in the consumer's Discovery process. This includes discovery of the consumer's interests, skills, abilities, learning styles, support needs, etc. This information is utilized to identify an appropriate employment goal and the nature and scope of services needed to achieve the goal. The number of weeks each consumer participates in work experiences will vary based on the specific needs of the consumer and the individualized discovery process that needs to occur.

## Situational Assessment

**Q: Where can a situational assessment take place? My office, client's home, job site?**

A: A situational assessment is distinguished from other types of assessments due to the ability of the provider to control and vary the task(s) or environment(s) in order to gather performance-based information about a consumer from a vocational environment or by his or her performance on a specific job-related task. The purpose of a situational assessment is to assess an individual's strengths and needs through observation of the individual's behavioral and job task performance, and to make recommendations for employment service planning. A situational assessment should provide information about the individual's aptitudes, abilities, skills, behaviors, and preferences, or determine if a specific employment opportunity, or a specific employment setting, would be a good fit. Therefore, a situational assessment may occur in a variety of different settings as long as the setting meets the needs of the consumer, and is a purposeful service in which the consumer is assessed and specific information is obtained from such assessment.

**Q: Is a situational assessment the same as a job trial? How is it different than a work experience?**

A: Please see the *VR Employment Services Manual* for details on Situational Assessments including the service definition and expectations. Situational Assessments are replacing the service formerly called 'Community Based Evaluations' (CBE).

## Job Readiness Training

**Q: Is job readiness training different than discovery?**



A: Job Readiness training is a separate service, and is not part of the discovery process. It is necessary to have identified a vocational goal prior to determining whether job readiness training is needed. Please refer to the *VR Employment Services Manual* for more details about Job Readiness Training.

**Q: Will everyone receive job readiness training? When will it occur? Is there a timeframe on job readiness?**

A: No, not every VR consumer will require job readiness training. Many consumers will not require this service. While all VR consumers experience barriers to employment, often times those barriers can be addressed by ensuring an appropriate job match in the individual's ideal work environment. At times, the identified barrier results in such a significant deficit to achieving a competitive, integrated employment goal, or even successfully participating in job development, that Job Readiness Training is necessary. Job Readiness Training may be provided to address a specific, significant barrier a consumer is experiencing regarding one or more appropriate work behaviors or performance, including getting to work on time, appropriate dress and grooming, increasing productivity, soft skills development, and social skills development.

Given the information in the preceding paragraph, it will be necessary to have an identified employment goal prior to determining whether Job Readiness Training is a needed service. The service should be included on the VR IPE. There is no specific timeframe for Job Readiness Training; however a training start date and targeted training goal achievement date should be outlined on the Job Readiness Training Plan. A determination as to the duration of training will vary by consumer, and will be based on a number of factors such as individual needs, consumer progress, etc.

**Q: Where do the following activities fit in: creating a resume, interview prep, completing applications, etc.?**

A: These activities will occur as part of job development and placement, typically funded through Milestone 1.

**Q: Is transportation training included in job readiness training?**

A: No, transportation training would not be provided under Job Readiness Training. Transportation is an allowable VR service. Transportation training is a separate service with a separate service code.

**Q: Can we authorize for job readiness prior to job development?**

A: Yes, Job Readiness Training may, and often will, occur prior to job development. Job Readiness Training should be outlined as a service on the VR IPE.

**Q: If we identify an issue that needs to be addressed after a person is on the job, could the consumer receive job readiness then? Can you go back to job readiness training if someone lost a job and then issues popped up?**

A: Yes, Job Readiness Training may occur once a person is on the job; however issues with performance of tasks or behaviors can often be addressed through Supported Employment Services or other supports on the job. Job Readiness Training may also occur if a specific barrier needs to be addressed after a job loss and prior to initiating an additional job search.

**Q: When a consumer needs job readiness training, is that done in conjunction with job search or is the job search put on hold while doing the training? For example, if an individual has been in job search and a**



**training need is identified and referred – will the individual continue to job search or is it best to hold off until progress is made?**

A: Depending on the specific situation and the needs and informed choice of the consumer, it may be necessary to wait to begin job development until Job Readiness Training is complete or substantial progress toward the training goal(s) has been met. However, for some situations, it may be appropriate to conduct job development while Job Readiness Training is still in process. The team must discuss the specifics of the situation and the needs of the consumer and make an appropriate determination that best serves the consumer and his/her informed choice.

**Q: Is job readiness only one-on-one or can we do it in groups/classes?**

A: Job Readiness Training must be provided on a one-on-one basis.

**Q: How are we requesting hours for job readiness training?**

A: The Job Readiness Training Plan will outline the individual consumer's specific barrier, the training strategies, the goal of the training, the target goal completion date, and the number of training hours needed. This plan will be submitted to the VR Counselor for approval prior to the commencement of services.

**Q: Would the job coach/employment specialist do the job readiness training? Could VR fund a behavior specialist to provide Job Readiness Training?**

A: Job Readiness Training may be provided by a variety of qualified providers, which may include, but not limited to, an employment specialist or behavioral therapist or specialist. The provider carrying out this service must be capable of identifying and implementing effective training strategies and techniques and assessing progress toward achievement of Job Readiness Training Goals. Depending on the specific training need, a specialist or subject matter expert may need to be involved in Job Readiness Training.

**Q: Under job readiness training, the definition talks about teaching soft skills. How would you define soft skills?**

A: Soft skills refers to various behaviors that help people work and socialize well with others, such as communication skills, interpersonal skills, teamwork, problem solving, dependability, time management, conflict resolution, and other personality traits and attributes that are desirable in many work settings. Soft skills are subjective skills, while hard skills are quantifiable knowledge and abilities that are required for a specific type of job. Examples of hard skills include typing speed, a specific degree or certification, proficiency in a foreign language, mathematics, etc.

## Milestones

**Q: What defines a calendar week? If a client only works one day on the job, does that mean a week?**

A: Milestone 1 may be reimbursed upon the completion of the consumer's first calendar week on the job which is based on the job start date, regardless of the number of days worked that week. The only exception to this is in situations where the Notice of Job Offer (NOJO) is **not** submitted to and approved by VR prior to the job start date. In those situations, Milestone 1 may be reimbursed 1 calendar week **after** VR approval of



the NOJO. It is important that NOJO's are submitted prior to the job start date so that the VR Counselor can ensure the job is in line with the consumer's IPE goal, desired wages and hours, and other factors. Note: If an employer makes a job offer that would result in an immediate start date (i.e. offer made on Friday afternoon with a start date on Sunday), and a NOJO cannot be completed immediately, please ensure that immediate communication with the VR Counselor takes place (i.e. email, phone call, etc.), and then follow up with submission of the NOJO as soon as possible.

**Q: Is Milestone 2 stability or just counting calendar days? How do you define 4 weeks on the job?**

A: Milestone 2 may be reimbursed upon completion of the consumer's fourth calendar week on the job based on job start date. Stabilization may or may not have occurred by the time Milestone 2 is achieved. Consumers will achieve stabilization, or their highest level of independence on the job, at varying times. Identification that stabilization has occurred is a very individualized process and is not a factor in determining whether Milestone 2 may be reimbursed. If a consumer needs additional supports beyond 4 weeks on the job, it is critical that those current and future needs and the necessary supports and services needed in order to assist the consumer in achieving stabilization are thoroughly outlined on the *Employment Support and Retention Plan*. Please see the *VR Employment Services Manual* for more detail regarding stabilization.

**Q: Is Milestone 3 90 days? When does the 90 day retention period start?**

A: Milestone 3, Retention may be reimbursed 90 days **after** stabilization has occurred. Remember that stabilization will occur at varying times for each consumer. The 90-day retention period begins on the date that stabilization occurs.

**Q: Can VR authorize for Milestone 1 and 2 at the same time?**

A: VR may authorize for multiple milestone at the same time as appropriate.

**Q: If a provider is not involved in the Discovery process, and receives a referral at the time of placement, will the provider be authorized for some hours to develop a plan?**

A: In situations where a provider is not involved until the time that job development begins, it is appropriate for VR to authorize an appropriate number of hours of hourly job placement for purposes of the provider to get to know the consumer, review background information, and develop strategies for the job search. VR may ask the provider to complete Part B of the *Discovery Profile* to outline responsibilities, expectations, and responsibilities. This documentation time would be billable time.

**Q: If a person loses his/her job how do we determine what to do? Can a milestone be paid more than once during the life of a case if needed?**

A: If a consumer loses the job after one or more milestones have been paid, the Employment Consultant should work with the VR Counselor and consumer to determine how to proceed with the case. Depending on the intensity of services (i.e. job development) needed to regain employment, it may be appropriate for VR to pay one or more milestones again. For some consumers, repaying milestones may not be the most appropriate approach. Instead, it may be most beneficial for VR to authorize some hourly job search assistance to regain employment. The determination for how to proceed in these situations will be made by the VR Counselor, and must take into consideration the steps that are best for the consumer. The determination for how to proceed will be made on a case-by-case basis.



**Q: What if someone needs a high level of support that first four weeks?**

A: Milestone 2 will fund up to 35 hours of support during the first four weeks on the job. If a consumer requires more support than 35 hours during those first four weeks, the best practice is for the Employment Consultant to submit the Employment Support and Retention plan as soon as possible (i.e., prior to completion of the fourth week on the job) to demonstrate the need for supports and to request that additional supports begin prior to completion of the consumer's fourth week on the job.

## Stabilization

**Q: What is the definition of stabilization?**

A: Stabilization is considered the point in time where the consumer has reached his/her highest level of independence on the job after an appropriate period of supports (including supported employment services that may be funded by VR for generally up to 24 months), and is jointly agreed to by the consumer and the VR counselor. With supported employment services, there is an expectation that fading of supports occurs prior to stabilization. Please see the *VR Employment Services Manual* for more details including questions to be considered when determining if stabilization has occurred.

**Q: For those that do not need the support (e.g., college graduate), when does stabilization occur? Could stabilization be achieved right away for some consumers? If someone is stable day one then would you submit the Employment Support and Retention Plan right away?**

A: Individual's will achieve stabilization at varying times, based on the level and intensity of support needed. It is possible that a consumer could be stable day one on the job, while others will not be at their most independent level until several months on the job. If a consumer is stable immediately, it is a best practice to submit the *Employment Support and Retention Plan* as soon as possible, as well as having a conversation with the VR Counselor to determine the specific date that stabilization occurred. Note: If it is determined that a consumer does not need the full services (i.e., support and short term retention) in the employment services model, VR and consumer may determine hourly employment services are more appropriate (i.e., job search/job placement assistance).

**Q: What documentation will be used for stabilization? How do we make sure everyone is on the same page regarding the date that stabilization occurred?**

A: The *Employment Support and Retention Plan* will indicate the date of stabilization, and provide progress notes regarding the consumer's level of independence on the job, fading of supports, and additional information. The milestone billing and verification invoice form also includes the stabilization date. Aside from completing necessary documentation, it is critical that communication with the VR Counselor takes place regarding each consumer's progress toward stabilization. VR will typically authorize for Milestone 3 once it is determined that stabilization has occurred.

**Q: What if a consumer becomes stable, but then during the 90-day retention period something happens and then we need to increase support. Does the 90 days have to start over again?**

A: If the consumer was determined to be stable, but then circumstances changed during the 90-day retention period and the consumer is no longer stable, the 90 day 'clock' would begin again once stability is reached. VR



funding for additional supports could be available in these situations to ensure that the consumer obtains the needed supports.

**Q: Does the employer still have to sign a form?**

A: There is no required signature from an employer on any of the documentation. However, feedback and input from the employer either directly or indirectly (e.g., consumer performance review) may be beneficial in making determinations about level of supports and stabilization.

## Supported Employment

**Q: Who makes the determination as to whether an eligible VR consumer is an individual with a Most Significant Disability (MSD), Significant Disability (SD), or Non-Significant Disability (NDS)?**

A: Severity determination is made by the VR Counselor, and is typically made about the same time that a consumer is determined eligible for VR. VR Counselors may revisit severity later in the case and change severity to a more significant level if appropriate (i.e. if new information arises such as identification of an additional functional limitation area). Additional information about severity levels is outlined in the *VR Employment Services Manual*.

**Q: In the old model a consumer could be an individual with a Most Significant Disability (MSD) but not have Supported Employment services. Is that still true in new model?**

A: Supported Employment services are ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with the most significant disability (MSD) in his/her employment outcome. An individual who is considered MSD may access ongoing support services and other appropriate services in order to achieve his/her employment goal. It is important **not** to only equate Supported Employment services with VR's Employment Services Model and the additional supported employment (SE) funding. While many consumers identified as an individual with the MSD will likely receive employment services through the VR employment model with additional SE funding, a consumer with the MSD may need "other appropriate services" (i.e., assistive technology, job search/placement assistance, vehicle modification, etc.) and the plan may not include the VR employment model milestones with added SE funding. The VR Counselor and consumer will determine appropriate services as part of his/her IPE.

**Q: What is SEFA? Who pays for SEFA? Are there other funding sources for Extended Services other than BDDS?**

A: Supported Employment Follow Along (or commonly referred to as SEFA) is a service provided through the Bureau of Development Disabilities Services (BDDS). If a consumer is eligible as determined by BDDS, SEFA is one source of funding for Extended Services. Extended Services may be provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, natural supports, or any other appropriate resource from funds other than VR.

**Q: If we believe a consumer will require long-term supported employment (extended services), do we need to identify how that will be funded before the consumer begins services?**

A: It is important that early conversations take place between VR, the consumer, and the provider to begin planning for the transition to extended services early in the process. However, employment services may begin



regardless of whether an identified funding source for extended services has been provided. It is important to recognize the impact that a good job match with appropriate and intensive ongoing supports may have on the amount and type of extended services an individual may need long term in order to maintain the consumer's job. Therefore, it is important not to pre-determine the amount and type of extended services, but it is valuable to begin identifying extended service options an individual may have available to him/her. When it has been determined that a consumer is stable on the job the process to transition to extended services must begin, and this process must identify the consumer's ongoing specific need(s), types of supports and services, the source of extended services (e.g., natural supports, Medicaid Rehabilitation Option (MRO), BDDS, other), and the projected number of hours.

**Q: What if a person requires more than 24 months of Supported Employment services in order to achieve stabilization?**

A: These situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. VR does have the ability to fund Supported Employment Services beyond 24 months if required to ensure the consumer is able to achieve a greater level of independence.

## Post-Employment

**Q: When is it appropriate to serve a consumer under Post-Employment when is it not?**

A: A consumer may be served through VR Post-employment in situations where services are needed after a successful case closure to maintain, regain, or advance in employment. Post-Employment services are available to meet rehabilitation needs that do not require a complex and comprehensive provision of services and should be limited in scope and duration. For example, such services are available to assist an individual whose job may be in jeopardy because of a conflict with coworkers, or the consumer needs assistance in learning a new skill because of a change in job duties. Post-employment services are not appropriate for individuals who did not have a successful VR outcome with their prior case, individuals who require more comprehensive or complex services, or individuals who may require a change in their vocational goal. The VR Counselor will make a determination of whether a consumer may be served through Post-Employment.

**Q: Can supported employment be provided as a Post-Employment service?**

A: Yes, supported employment services are an allowable service under post-employment in line with the response provided to the question above. The consumer's prior *Employment Support and Retention Plan* may provide information to assist with this determination, specifically under the question "*Are there any ongoing or future concerns that may impact job retention?*"

## Documentation

### Employment Support & Retention Plan:

**Q: Will everyone have an Employment Support and Retention plan? When is the support and retention plan completed?**

A: Yes, providers will need to complete the *Employment Support and Retention Plan* for every consumer who is receiving employment services through the milestone payments as well as for consumers who may already



have a job and are receiving supported employment services from VR (e.g. transition students who exit school with a job they wish to sustain long-term who do not require job development, but do require supports on the job). The *Employment Support and Retention Plan* must initially be completed no later than the completion of 4 calendar weeks on the job, and must be updated quarterly as long as the consumer is still receiving support and he or she is not yet stable.

**Q: How is the Employment Supports and Retention Plan linked to stability?**

A: This document will demonstrate each consumer's progress toward independence on the job, fading of supports, and will identify the date stabilization occurred.

**Q: Who fills out the Employment Support and Retention Plan?**

A: The Employment Specialist who is providing the needed supports is responsible for completing and updating this document.

**Q: How often is the Employment Support and Retention Plan updated? How often can providers bill for hours of support provided?**

A: The document must be updated at least quarterly as long as the consumer is still receiving support and not yet stable (think of page 1 of the *Employment Support and Retention Plan* as 'quarterly'). Providers must submit progress, billing, and an update on whether stabilization has been achieved monthly (think of page 2 of the plan as 'monthly').

**Discovery Profile:**

**Q: Does the VR Discovery Profile start with the VRC? Is the VR Discovery Profile primarily for providers to complete?**

A: If providers are involved in carrying out one or more Discovery activities for a consumer, then there is a requirement providers complete the profile. VR Counselors may use the profile as a tool for capturing information about the consumer, whether or not a provider or other entities are involved in the Discovery process.

**Q: Does information continue to go on the Discovery profile once we have moved onto other services?**

A: The *Discovery Profile* is a living document during the Discovery process and should constantly be updated throughout this process (at least monthly). Once the initial Discovery process is completed, and the VR IPE is developed, then the information on the *Discovery Profile* is no longer required to be updated. However, if Discovery is revisited at any time later in the life of the case, the profile should be updated as applicable. It is not necessary to update the profile simply to change the job goal if the goal changes later in the life of the case. The VR IPE will need to be updated if there is a change in the job goal.

**Q: Does there have to be a single vocational goal on the VR Discovery Profile or can there be multiple options?**



A: It is acceptable to list more than one goal (listing more than 2 or 3 is not recommended) if there is more than one specific vocational goal that has been determined to be a good match for the consumer after completion of the Discovery process. The VR Counselor will need to identify one specific goal for the VR IPE.

**Q: Are monthly reports required during the Discovery process? Is monthly communication required in addition to the Discovery Profile?**

A: The *Discovery Profile* is a living document that should be continuously updated throughout the Discovery process. The profile must be submitted to VR monthly during the process and inclusive of appropriate additions and updates to the profile, as well as for purposes of billing. Therefore, additional monthly progress reports are not necessary during the Discovery process.

**Q: How do providers request an authorization to carry out additional discovery activities, or increase the number of authorized hours for a discovery activity?**

A: If the Employment Specialist and consumer feel additional Discovery activities are necessary to identify the consumer's appropriate job goal and nature and scope of services needed to reach the goal, then a request to VR is appropriate. The Employment Specialist should provide to VR the reason for the additional activity(ies), an explanation of what should be gained from the additional activity(ies), and then provide the number of estimated hours necessary to carry out the activity(ies). The *Discovery Profile* should also be updated and submitted to the VR Counselor so the Counselor has a good understanding of what Discovery activities have occurred to date and what has been learned so far.

**Q: Do you have to do the PES and Discovery Profile?**

A: No, the Plan for Employment and Supports (PES) will be discontinued with the roll-out of the employment service revisions.

**Q: Is there an official meeting with the VR Counselor once Discovery is completed and the Profile is finalized? Should the job coach attend the IPE meeting?**

A: Communication to the VR Counselor is necessary upon completion of Discovery process and finalization of the *Discovery Profile*. Communication may occur via in-person meeting, conference call, or other means. This is considered billable time for the CRP. As much as possible, the 'Expectations' section in Part B of the *Discovery Profile* should be developed by the full team (Consumer, VR Counselor, and Employment Consultant). It may be beneficial for the Employment Consultant to attend the IPE meeting, depending on the specific situation and if the consumer selects to have the Employment Consultant attend.

## Billing

**Q: How is the number of hours provided for the hourly services determined? Is there a cap on hourly billing?**

A: When discovery activities or other hourly services are required, it is important to first clearly articulate the specific need(s) of the consumer and how the need(s) will be met. Then based on that information, providers may request funding from VR for the estimated number of hours they believe will be needed to meet those needs. There are no caps on hourly services that VR may fund; however, services must be purposeful and



necessary for the consumer to achieve his/her employment goal and based on the consumer's informed choice.

**Q: For what services/steps will providers need to generate an invoice?**

A: Please see the Employment Service Manual for detail on when a provider-generated invoice is required. Note that some of the VR required forms will suffice as an invoice, but for some services a separate provider-generated invoice is necessary. The Billing/Invoice section of the Employment Service manual has been updated and now contains details about invoice requirements.

**Q: What activities are billable and non-billable? Is documentation time billable for instance?**

A: In general, time spent on-site with consumers directly engaged in discovery or employment activities, and off-site time including documentation time, site development, and meetings with the consumer is billable. Travel time is not billable; however, providers may receive mileage reimbursement from VR. Please refer to the Employment Service Manual for full details.

**Q: In review of the Manual of Employment Services, mileage at the state rate is reimbursable for Discovery, monthly level SE services and other hourly services and is reimbursed only after the provider has reimbursed the CRP staff and has verified that the mileage billed to VR is accurate. Is there a form for CRPs to use to verify that the mileage is correct and to bill VR for reimbursement?**

A: There is a worksheet that should be used for tracking of hourly billable services as well as mileage. This should be submitted with a monthly invoice to VR. Please see the worksheet (located at [www.VRS.in.gov](http://www.VRS.in.gov)) for further instructions.

## Miscellaneous

**Q: For Vocational Testing, what do you mean by qualified provider?**

A: Some vocational testing, such as formal interest inventories may require certain qualifications for staff to administer, interpret, and score the testing. Other vocational testing is less formal or more hands-on and would not require the same staff qualifications. VR expects its Community Rehabilitation Providers to adhere to such qualifications (if any) for appropriate administration of vocational testing.

**Q: Can you use restoration services with employment services?**

A: There are no changes occurring to any VR services other than employment services. If a consumer requires restoration services or any other type of services in order to achieve the employment goal, and these services are included on the consumer's IPE, then VR will authorize for services as appropriate.

**Q: Are BIN plans to be done after July 1?**

A: Yes, there are no changes with BIN services. BIN services may continue as they do today.

**Q: This process seems to be in direct conflict with consumers who need a job "yesterday". How do we deal with those individuals?**



A: The new employment services' revisions are designed to support consumers of varying needs and to be more responsive to all consumers. While all consumers require some Discovery, for some consumers Discovery could be very minimal. For instance, the Discovery for some consumers may take place through one or two meetings with the VR Counselor (e.g., intake meeting and IPE meeting) and then the consumer may be ready to begin job development. For other consumers, the Discovery process will need to be much more intensive and involve multiple activities (i.e. job shadows, situational assessments, home visits, informational interviews, etc.).

**Q: Will Hourly still be available for job search and job placement?**

A: Hourly services are still available and should be used in appropriate circumstances. Please see the Employment Service Manual for definitions of all employment services and appropriate use of each service.

**Q: As far as incentives to employers, has the OJT component been removed?**

A: No, OJT services will continue to be available. This is a service arranged with employers and not a service that is funded through CRPs, and therefore OJT's are not included in the Employment Service Manual. The Employment Service Manual is specific to employment services that may be available through CRPs.

**Q: Will the Community Based Evaluation (CBE) referrals still continue?**

A: No, situational assessments will replace CBEs. Please see the Employment Service Manual for details about situational assessments. Referrals for CBEs will NOT continue after June 30, 2015.

**Q: When does a referral occur to a provider?**

A: A referral to a CRP may occur at a number of times. For instance, a referral could occur early in the Discovery process, at the time of job development, or at the time that supports are needed in the case where a consumer comes to VR for purposes of maintaining a job. A referral will be made when it is most appropriate for each consumer.

**Q: Do we still need to have one specific vocational goal when we do our IPE?**

A: Yes, the IPE will need to contain one specific vocational goal. Some changes were made to the IPE in May of 2015 to allow for entry of a somewhat broader projected goal rather than the only option being selecting a specific job title from ONET. For VR staff, please refer to the IRIS Tip sent out 5/28/15.

**Q: At the end of the discovery profile, is that when the IPE is developed?**

A: Yes, in most cases. The *Discovery Profile* should provide information that is relevant and necessary for the development of the IPE, including the appropriate job goal and the nature and scope of services needed to achieve the goal. It is also important to note that Discovery may be revisited at any time during the life of the case. For example, additional Discovery activities may be needed to flesh out the job goal or more specifically identify the nature and scope of services needed to achieve the goal. In that situation, the initial IPE may be developed prior to the completion of the Discovery Process and then should be amended to reflect changes. Discovery may also need to be revisited at any time if the initial job goal is determined to be no longer appropriate. In those cases, the IPE would initially be developed prior to discovery, and then should be amended to reflect the necessary changes.





## IRIS (VR's Case Management System)

**Q: Will the IRIS reports in the future look different and reflect on the providers differently (how will providers be evaluated)?**

A: Yes, VRS will be working to implement modifications to provider reports in IRIS. VRS has identified some preliminary evaluation measures for the employment service revisions as a whole and will be obtaining feedback from the Rate Reform workgroup regarding appropriate evaluation measures.

**Q: Will there be different service codes for each activity? How can I find the new service codes?**

A: Please see the *VR Employment Services Manual*, Attachment B Service Codes and Rates for full details.

**Q: Will the IPE be changed, and specifically the supported employment fields?**

A: There will be some modifications to the IPE, including new 'triggers' for Supported Employment and Extended Services fields. An IRIS tip will be released with instruction on all specific changes.

**Q: Will the new forms be set up to auto-populate some consumer information?**

A: Yes, the forms that are most likely to be generated by VR Staff (Employment Services Referral form, Discovery Profile, Transfer to Extended Services) will be loaded into IRIS and information will be auto-populated as applicable. The remaining employment service forms will be loaded or updated in IRIS so they may be provided to CRPs with a referral if needed (NOJO, Milestone verification and invoice, Employment Support and Retention Plan, Job Readiness Training Plan).